

July 2012

The averaging period used for the following assessment was 1981-2010.

UK overview

The weather was again characterized by low pressure, with associated weather fronts, bringing rather cool, cloudy conditions and some high rainfall totals in the first half of the month. England and Wales enjoyed a much warmer, settled week from the 21st.

The UK mean temperature was 1.0 °C below the 1981-2010 average and it was the coolest July since 2000. It was a wet month, with many parts of England, North Wales and eastern Scotland having over twice their average rainfall. Only the far north-west of Scotland and west of Northern Ireland were drier than normal. Almost all areas were duller than usual, particularly Scotland where it was one of the duller Julys on record.

A maximum temperature of 30.7 °C was recorded at St James's Park (London) on the 25th. A minimum temperature of 0.0 °C was recorded at Resallach (Highland) early on the 2nd. In the 24 hours ending at 0900 on the 7th, 94.5 mm of rain fell at Ottery St Mary (Devon). A wind gust of 62 mph was recorded at Needles Old Battery (Isle of Wight) during the 16th.

Weather impacts

The cool and very unsettled weather of June continued into July and in the first half of the month there were numerous reports of flooding and disruption to outdoor events.

On the 5th, torrential rain in County Down led to localised flooding that affected roads and properties in Newcastle and Newry. On the 6th, prolonged heavy rain across much of central and northern England and Wales led to localised flooding, difficult driving conditions and high river levels.

On the 7th, heavy rain brought flooding to parts of Edinburgh, the Lothians and the Borders affecting road and rail services between Edinburgh and Glasgow. Meanwhile prolonged heavy rainfall across south and east Devon and Dorset resulted in rivers bursting their banks with roads and dozens of properties flooded. The A35 trunk road and the Exeter to Yeovil rail line were closed for several days. On the 9th, the Calder valley in West Yorkshire was hit by flash flooding after heavy rain, affecting roads and properties in towns such as Hebden Bridge for the third time in about 2 weeks. Some weekend outdoor sports and music events such as the qualifying sessions for the Formula One Grand Prix at Silverstone were adversely affected by waterlogged ground.

On the 18th, prolonged rainfall across central and eastern Scotland resulted in localised flooding in Fife and Perthshire and landslips delayed rail services in Fife and on the Glasgow to Oban route.

The very wet ground conditions also affected agriculture, for example the harvesting of vegetable crops in low-lying areas. The National Trust reported that the persistently cool wet conditions had proved difficult for wildlife, particularly many insects and birds.

However, the very wet weather meant that the final four water companies in south-east England could lift the hosepipe bans that were imposed in April.

A much warmer, more settled interlude lasted a week from the 21st, especially over England and Wales where it coincided with the start of the school summer holidays. This was welcomed in view of the poor summer so

far.

Towards month-end, cooler showery conditions returned with heavy rain affecting some Olympics events in the London area on the 29th.

England diary of highlights

The weather was again characterized by low pressure bringing rather cool, cloudy conditions with some high rainfall totals in the first half of the month. There was a much warmer, settled week from the 21st, but the unsettled theme resumed for the last few days.

The mean temperature was 1.0 °C below the 1981-2010 average. It was a wet month, with many areas having more than twice their average rainfall, and in East Anglia it was the second wettest July on record. All areas were duller than normal.

1st to 20th:

Low pressure controlled the weather throughout this period with bands of rain giving way to sunny spells and heavy, thundery showers which were slow-moving at times. Some exceptional rainfall totals were recorded during this period, particularly on 6th and 7th from a mixture of rain and thundery showers. 24-hour rainfall totals on 6th were over 50mm across south and east Devon and Dorset; Ottery St Mary (Devon) recorded 94.5mm in 24 hours to 0900 on 7th. In contrast, in the sunny spells between the showers, temperatures on 7th in the north-west rose to 22 °C. Under clear skies, temperatures early on 12th dipped widely below 8 °C. On 15th and 17th under weak ridges of high pressure, most places enjoyed dry days with temperatures approaching 24 °C in the London area on 17th.

21st to 28th:

By 21st high pressure extending from the Azores reached the UK, bringing a respite from the unsettled conditions. There was overnight cloud, mist and fog at times but this cleared to allow some hot and humid conditions to develop in the days preceding the start of the Olympic Games on 27th. Temperatures rose steadily through this period with maxima over 25 °C widely across England each day from 23rd to 26th. The warmest day of the year so far was 25th when 30.7 °C was recorded at St James's Park (London). A cold front began to edge southwards over northern England from 25th bringing an end to the fine, dry spell with all parts feeling much fresher by 28th.

29th to 31st:

The month ended with low pressure once more. Some cool days and nights with daytime maxima around 20 °C and night time minima widely below 8 °C. Sunshine and showers were widespread with thunder and hail reported. Late on 30th and into 31st rain spread north-eastwards.

Wales diary of highlights

A generally unsettled month, dull and rather cool and wet, but with a much warmer settled week in the second half.

The mean temperature was 1.0 °C below the 1981-2010 average. Rainfall was generally close to or somewhat above normal but parts of the north recorded more than twice the average amount. Sunshine amounts approached normal across the south but were well below normal in the north.

1st to 19th:

The weather was very unsettled with a succession of low pressure areas close to Wales and becoming slow moving. This led to periods of heavy rain, quite frequent showers and some thunderstorms across many areas. The period 6th into the 7th was particularly wet, the totals for the 24-hours to 0900 on 7th being widely around 20 to 30 mm with 31 mm recorded at St Athan (Glamorgan) and Colwyn Bay (Conwy). However, the slow-moving nature of the heavy showers also meant that there were also days where some places remained generally dry with periods of sunshine and, on occasion, showers were well scattered. Day time temperatures were generally near or below average, although there were also some warm days.

20th to 27th:

There was a change in conditions to much drier, warmer and sunnier weather. Clear skies resulted in near-unbroken sunshine and there were only isolated showers, mainly in the north. However, there was rather more cloud at times in northern areas from 25th. The warmest conditions were across southern areas where temperatures widely rose above 24 °C each day from 24th to 26th; the temperature reached 28.2 °C at Bute Park (Cardiff) on 26th.

28th to 31st:

A more unsettled pattern, as low pressure returned. Once again, heavy, thundery showers affected many parts of Wales but there were also some dry, sunny periods. Day time temperatures returned to near normal or somewhat below.

Scotland diary of highlights

A cool and very unsettled month with showers or longer spells of rain and little sunshine. Only the far north and west escaped the worst of the poor weather.

The mean temperature was 1.1 °C below the 1981-2010 average and it was the coolest July since 1998. It was much wetter than normal across eastern and southern Scotland, with over twice the normal amount in the Lothians, Fife and the eastern Borders where it was one of the wettest Julys on record. In contrast, the Western and Northern Isles and the far north were somewhat drier than normal. Sunshine was limited especially across the eastern half of Scotland where it was the third dullerest July on record.

1st to 10th:

Showers on 1st with the heaviest in the east and a similar day on 2nd with plenty of showers and the heaviest for central and south-eastern areas. The showery theme continued on 3rd with western areas seeing the heavier ones. The showers became more widespread on 4th with central and southern areas having thunderstorms; Gogarbank (Edinburgh) recorded 21 mm in an hour during the afternoon. The 5th again saw some heavy showers and thunderstorms develop mainly for the central Highlands, Ayrshire and Dumfries and Galloway, these fading overnight. Although 6th started with showers in south-eastern areas these cleared during the morning before rain reached the Borders during the late afternoon. This spread northwards to affect central areas on 7th with some heavy bursts; 15 mm was recorded in an hour at Edinburgh and 42 mm during the day. The rain moved northwards during the night to leave a drier day for southern areas on 8th. Some heavy rain in the north-west cleared overnight to leave a bright day for northern areas on 9th but more rain fell in central and southern areas, persisting for much of 10th and extending to the north-east.

11th to 20th:

Dry and cloudy in the west on 11th, with further rain in the north-west later. This quickly cleared away to the south-west although the rain persisted in the south-east, and it was dry but mainly cloudy elsewhere. Mainly dry but rather cloudy on 12th with scattered showers in the afternoon and 13th followed a similar theme with any showers restricted to western areas. The 14th generally saw showers for the northern half although on 15th these became more widespread and heavier, and it remained cool in a fresh north-westerly breeze. The

showers on 16th and 17th were mainly reserved for more northern areas with the remainder of the country having some bright spells. The 18th was wet as rain spread from the west during the early hours. The heaviest rain fell in the Lothians and Fife, with Edinburgh recording 55 mm. The rain cleared overnight to leave some showers on 19th for most areas. The 20th was a better day with fewer showers and brighter skies although it remained generally cloudy.

21st to 31st:

The 21st started bright but showers broke out in Tayside during the afternoon and rain spread into the Western Isles later in the day which cleared overnight. This left a cloudy day on 22nd with rain slowly spreading south-eastwards during the afternoon. The 23rd saw a slow moving band of rain clearing south-eastwards later in the day leaving much better days from 24th to 26th with more sunshine and temperatures around 21 °C in much of the south and east. From 27th to 30th there was a return to frequent and at times heavy showers for most areas with thunder on 29th for parts of Fife and the Lothians. A dry and bright start on 31st but rain spread from the south-west during the late afternoon and evening.

Northern Ireland diary of highlights

The weather was characterized by low pressure bringing rather cool, cloudy conditions with showers or longer spells of rain on most days. Warm, dry, sunny days were notably absent.

The mean temperature was 1.1 °C below the 1981-2010 average, and it was the coolest July since 1993. Rainfall was above average in most areas, but near average in County Fermanagh. All areas were duller than usual.

1st to 10th:

A scattering of mainly light showers for most areas on 1st, these dying out during the afternoon before rain spread from the west during the evening. This cleared overnight to leave another showery day on 2nd. A showery start to 3rd but more general rain spread from the west during the afternoon and overnight, clearing to leave a drier and brighter day on 4th. The showers returned on the morning of 5th, mainly for central and western areas, dying out during the afternoon. The 6th started cloudy and dry although rain spread into eastern areas during the late afternoon; totals around 20 mm were recorded near Belfast Lough with 25.4 mm at Stormont Castle (County Down). A band of rain spread from the south-east on 7th, lingering for much of the day and this was slow to clear on 8th, affecting mainly eastern areas. Another band of rain spread from the east on 9th which cleared the west during the afternoon but persisted in the south and east until later on 10th; 19.8 mm was recorded at Glenanne (County Armagh) on 10th.

11th to 21st:

Further rain spread from the north on 11th, quickly clearing to leave cloudy, showery conditions for the remainder of the day. Mainly dry and cloudy on 12th and 13th and continuing cool. The dry theme continued on 14th with more sunshine. The 15th saw a return to showers although these were generally light and well scattered and although 16th was dry for western areas the east saw some heavy but localised showers. A few scattered light showers during the morning of 17th although a band of heavier rain spread from the south during the late afternoon and evening which turned heavy for some parts overnight. 24-hour totals to 0900 on 18th were over 15 mm widely, with 27.4 mm at Ballypatrick Forest (County Antrim). The rain cleared northwards during the morning of 18th to leave a brighter day although some heavy showers broke out in eastern areas in the afternoon. The 19th and 20th saw a gradual improvement with only a few showers although it remained generally cloudy and 21st saw some sunshine although showers occurred in north-eastern areas during the afternoon.

22nd to 31st:

The 22nd was generally dry with only some patchy light rain for western areas during the evening. The rain remained for most of 23rd, giving totals of 10 to 20 mm in Counties Antrim and Down, clearing south-eastwards during the late afternoon. It was a bright start on 24th and also feeling warmer than of late however rain spread from the west during the evening but this cleared overnight to leave dry and bright days on 25th and 26th. The showery theme returned on 27th although they were generally light and scattered, however on 28th and 29th the showers become heavier and more frequent. The 30th saw a band of heavier showers affect north Antrim during the morning and move southwards during the afternoon and although 31st started bright a band of rain spread from the south-west during the afternoon, reaching all areas during the evening.

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